



Education & Outreach Committee MINUTES Pensacola & Perdido Bays Estuary Program

August 20th, 2020

2:00 pm CT

Virtual Meeting

[Recording Link](#)

Attendees

Chris Verlinde, Co-chair	U/IFAS Florida Sea Grant
Carrie Stevenson, Co-chair	UF/IFAS Extension
Jessica Bibza	NWF
Matt Posner	PPBEP
Logan McDonald	PPBEP
Samantha Bolduc	Escambia County
Darryl Boudreau	NFWFMD
Beth Fugate	FDEP
Angela Underwood	Weeks Bay
Barbara Albrecht	BFA
Rick O'Connor	UF/IFAS Extension
Lee Anne Winchester	WRC/BWFP
Hilde Snoeckx	UWF
Eric Schneider	ESA Pensacola
Erin McCarthy	Citizen
Amy Newbold	EPA-GMD
Kristin Bennett	Tetra Tech
Andrew Zupkoff	City of Milton
Kent Wimmer	Defenders of Wildlife
Lee Yokel	GOMA
Mary Guterrez	Earth Ethics
Kent Smith	FWC

1. Call to Order

2. Introductions

Co-chair Chris Verlinde introduced Co-chair Carrie Stevenson and the new PPBEP Community Outreach Coordinator, Logan McDonald. Ms. Verlinde then introduced Matt Posner, Interim Director, and Samantha Bolduc, Escambia County Community Outreach Specialist.

3. Staff Updates

a. Website

Staff informed the committee that they are working on building a new website that will better serve the program's needs. A few of the highlighted features included a community calendar and teacher corner. Chris Verlinde, Co-Chair, highlighted that there has been a high level of interest in seeing a centralized community event calendar. Logan McDonald shared the draft page structure and asked for suggestions.

b. Branding

Ms. McDonald announced that the program is partnering with idgroup to begin re-branding the program, which will include a new logo.

c. Social Media

Ms. McDonald shared the program's social media pages and encouraged committee members to follow the program's social media accounts and to like and share content. Staff stated they anticipate running targeted social media promotions in September to expand the program's audience. Ms. McDonald introduced the program's new Instagram account and shared that the program's Facebook page followers had more than doubled in the last month. Staff stated they are still waiting on Twitter to provide access to the program's account, if the information is not provided the program will likely create a new Twitter handle.

d. Promotional Video

Staff shared that a promotional video is in the works in partnership with Darryl Boudreau, NFWFMD that will serve as a video cover for the program's Facebook page. Ms. McDonald stated she is hopeful that the video may be completed in time for National Estuaries Week.

e. CivicCon Presentation

Staff informed the committee that Matt Posner, Interim Director, and Whitney Scheffel, Senior Scientist, gave a presentation at a CivicCon impact event with 125+ participants to introduce the program to the public.

f. Listening Tour/Dialogue Sessions

Ms. McDonald stated that there was a desire for public input at the CivicCon presentation that time had not allowed for. Staff will be initiating a Listening Tour to make sure the community can provide input and be heard as staff works to develop the CCMP.

g. Values Survey

Staff shared that a survey to determine community values that will inform the CCMP is in process with the UWF Haas Center.

h. Storm Drain ToolKit

Ms. McDonald informed the committee that the program hopes to roll out the storm drain stenciling and marking project for National Estuaries Week, September 19-26.

4. Bay Day Grant Purchasing - \$2,900

Ms. Verlinde presented a list of supplies compiled by staff that could be obtained with the IP grant funds originally slated for Bay Day. Mr. Posner stated that IP was supportive of the program using the funds for educational supplies outside of the original grant scope due to the event being cancelled in response to Covid-19. Ms. Stevenson suggested a portable microscope that can broadcast to the web or tablet. A request was made for the product information in chat and a link was shared by Ms. Stevenson. <https://amzn.to/2YmxptD>. Barbara Albrecht, BFA, informed the committee that the Black Water River Foundation had shared their outreach materials that the program may be interested in. Ms. Verlinde agreed that they had an outstanding Blackwater River curriculum that could be updated. Beth Fugate, FDEP, offered to lend Envirosopes to PPBEP.

5. Vision

Ms. McDonald discussed the importance of a vision and mission to guide the committee as work begins to develop the formal community engagement plan. Staff presented a draft vision and mission statement and asked for suggestions and comments.

6. Community Engagement Plan

a. Educator Survey

Ms. Verlinde shared that Florida Sea Grant is working to develop virtual coastal field trips for teachers and they have solicited input via a teacher survey. The committee expressed excitement at seeing the results of the survey and asked members to share the survey link with educators. Ms. McDonald presented a draft survey initiated by Ms. Bolduc, Escambia County, for Escambia County outreach efforts. Staff asked for additional feedback to build out the survey to meet the program's needs. Lee Yokel, GOMA, suggested capturing diversity metrics, including Title I status. Ms. Stevenson inquired if staff had talked with district science coordinators yet and shared that Rick O'Connor's wife, Molly, was working on a lot of virtual content at Ron Hyatt Environmental Center (RHEC) since no field trips would be allowed in the first quarter. Mr. O'Connor, Escambia County Sea Grant, shared that the science coordinator, Carol, has approved content, but there does not seem to be a district wide plan. RHEC has developed a series of 2 programs a week with 4-5 classes in 2nd and 5th grade that can register. Mr. O'Connor suggested that teachers across the district may have varying level of needs.

https://ufl.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_6JVfR1x8nKiOUJ

b. Resources Crosswalk

Staff reinforced the need to inventory K-12 resources to avoid re-creating content and to add the resources to the new website. Several programs were shared by participants in the chat. Ms. Verlinde shared that some of the resources had been compiled already by SeaGrant and DISL.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1FaTdI2Jr_I8W-WN6q6x1Ndw_hAW2cFkDFjRUWFkd_fs/edit#gid=0

c. Plan Discussion

Ms. McDonald asked the committee if they thought a separate working group should be created to focus on the creation of the strategic community engagement plan. Jessica Bibza, NWF, asked how the plan is incorporated within the CCMP. Amy Newbold, EPA, shared that elements of the plan are woven into the CCMP but the EPA does ask for a stand-alone community engagement document. Mr. Boudreau suggested that a separate working group may be appropriate if the committee meetings are already at capacity. Mr. Posner suggested breaking down the framework at the next meeting and identifying priorities to determine whether the amount of work required would necessitate a separate working group.

7. National Estuaries Week

a. Storm Drain Toolkit

Ms. McDonald asked for recommendations for high visibility and trafficked locations across the watershed to deploy drain medallion markers and paint drain stencils. Mr. Boudreau

suggested using the drain medallion markers to connect the upper watershed communities to the bays, including Century and Brewton. Barbara Albrecht, BFA, offered to incorporate the medallions at BFA water quality sampling stations, which included bridges and other pedestrian access points. Staff stated they are still figuring out the logistics of the project and they have asked the Policy Board for location suggestions. Mr. Boudreau suggested tapping into churches and other groups that may not already be involved with the program.

b. Other Events

Staff offered to share and promote any partner projects or events planned for National Estuaries Week. Mr. O'Connor, Escambia County Florida SeaGrant, mentioned that he is currently working on a virtual scavenger hunt.

8. Around the Room/Announcements/Public Comment

- Kent Wimmer, Defenders of Wildlife, shared that they are anticipating pre-proposals for Sentinel Landscape Applications in November or December. They are looking for letters of support from partner agencies for their application. Partners interested in submitting a letter of support should contact Kent Wimmer at kwimmer@defenders.org.
- The EPA Gulf of Mexico Program has a new funding opportunity ranging from \$250,000 - \$1 million focused on agriculture/silviculture lands water quality, habitat, resiliency, and sustainable management that is due October 16th. <https://www.epa.gov/gulfofmexico/farmer-farmer-rfa-and-supporting-documents>
- Paddle the Gulf is releasing a new website that will be shared by Angela Underwood, Weeks Bay NERR, when it goes live. A Paddle the Gulf event is being held on September 19th which is also the day of the Alabama Coastal Cleanup. An iNaturalist event has also been created for participants to enter sightings.